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ABSTRACT

This document is the first of a series of four developed to provide a comprehensive overview of parent involvement, encompassing the family, parenting needs, and existing resources, in addition to current parent education approaches and practices. This "Overview" is a panoramic scan of Parent involvement programs, including child-rearing practices. Divided into three sections, it addresses the basis for parent involvement, what it consists of, and what can be expected in the future. It includes a discussion of how parents and child-rearing practices have influenced the development of parenting and parent education programs. An analysis of numerous parent program models is presented, evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, critical issues and needs that parent involvement should address as we move toward the next century are examined. The Overview is intended to serve as an introduction for educators, including parent educators, who are working with parents. Through the information provided, insights into program planning and development are given. Two significant issues are raised: parents are neglected as resources; and neither parents nor educators involved with parents are viewed as adult learners. (KC)

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GUIDE TO PARENT INVOLVEMENT:
PARENTS AS ADULT LEARNERS

Overview of Parent Involvement
Programs and Practices

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Preface

In order to provide a comprehensive overview of parent involvement, a series of four documents has been developed encompassing the family, parenting needs, and existing resources, in addition to current parent education approaches and practices. While each document represents a unique aspect of parent involvement, all fall under the rubric of a Guide to Parent Involvement: Parents as Adult Learners. The documents within this series are:

- .Overview of Parent Involvement Programs and Practices
- .The Family Academy Model of the Family as Educator
- .Parent Participation Profile
- .Annotated Bibliography on the Family

Represented within these documents is an analysis of parent involvement programs which includes child-rearing practices; an interpretation of how the family functions as educator; a needs assessment instrument that addresses how parents perceive their input and participation; and an extensive review of literature related to the family and parent education.

Parent involvement, which encompasses parenting and parent education, is by no means a new phenomena. However, only within the past two decades has impetus mounted for program expansion. Even so, the plethora of parenting programs that have emerged have not been adequately addressed by the education community. Within the context of training, parent educators are, for the most part, self-made. Furthermore, while parent educators tend to view parents as educators of their children, the adult learning aspects of parenthood are unaddressed.

The Guide to Parent Involvement: Parents as Adult Learners is intended (1) to contribute to the information gap relating to parent involvement, especially regarding the training needs of parents; (2) to present the family as a valuable resource in the training process; and (3) to provide educators working with parents with additional tools for enhancing program development and practices. Within the framework of the Guide, we also have sought to respond to the following questions.

- How can early childhood education concepts and methods be applied to adult learning?
- What is the impact of family life and work life on the adult learning process?
- How is the interaction between adults and children part of the adult learning process?

Heartfelt appreciation for their good humor, team spirit, tireless determination, and skillful work in producing successive versions of this document goes to Marjorie Lambert, Office Manager, who kept it (and us as well) all together, and to Jeanetta Bruce and Terry Raffelt, Research Secretaries, for their indomitable spirit and their tenacious perseverance to complete the task at hand.

Winifred I. Warnat
September, 1980

Introduction

The decade of the seventies has been preoccupied with concern over the decline of the American family, which probably reached its climax with the 1979 International Year of the Child and the 1980 White House Conference on Families. By the conclusion of the White House Conference, it has become increasingly evident that a mood change has been taking place indicating the revival of faith in the family and its strength as our primary social institution. Nowhere is this more evident than in the profusion of parent involvement efforts that continue to expand. The Overview of Parent Involvement Programs and Practices provides a panoramic scan of those efforts.

Divided into three sections, it addresses the basis for parent involvement, what it consists of, and what can be expected in the future. It concludes a discussion of how parents and child-rearing practices have influenced the development of parenting and parent education programs. An analysis of numerous parent program models is presented which takes into account their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, critical issues and needs that parent involvement should address as we move toward the twenty-first century are examined.

The Overview of Parent Involvement Programs and Practices is intended to serve as an introduction for educators, including parent educators, who are working with parents in some capacity. Through the information provided, important insights into program planning and development are given. Two significant realizations are brought to fore--parents are neglected as the resources that they are; and neither parents nor educators involved with parents are viewed as adult learners. Furthermore, the training of parent educators is at best nominal.

Part I

THE FOUNDATION OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents and Child-Rearing Practices

Historical Perspective

A comprehensive examination of parent involvement efforts today, would not be complete without first acknowledging its foundation --the diverse child-rearing practices of American families. Concern over the proper raising of children and the provision of some form of parent education to do so are part of our early American history that can be traced back to the early nineteenth century. As early as 1815 mothers met in groups called "natural associations" and shared concerns about the moral and religious development of their children. The first organization to provide a parent education program is the Child Study Association of America, formerly the Society for the Study of Child Nature, which was founded in 1888, and is still in operation today.

In 1909, the first White House Conference on Child Welfare signaled federal interest in parenting. This was followed in 1912 by the creation of the Children's Bureau, and in 1914 the U.S. Department of Agriculture provided County Home Demonstration Agents to assist mothers in "homemaking." The United States Public Health Service began health oriented programs in parent education in 1918.

During the Depression of the early 1930's, the Works Progress Administration provided teachers, group leaders, and other trained personnel to present information about child behavior to parents. Also at that time, major universities, including Columbia and Cornell Universities and the Universities of Minnesota and Iowa, began doing research on child study and parent education.

A brief decline in interest in parent education ensued during the late thirties as a result of family experts questioning the permanency of traditional family life and the impact of World War II in the nation as a whole. From the 1940's to the present, interest and involvement in parent education has continued to increase with the areas of Agriculture, Education, and Mental Health as the greatest supporters. Now both the public and private sectors, nationally and locally, operate all manner and description of parent education programs. With that historical sketch of the evolution of parent involvement in the United States, a closer look at the child-rearing practices that influenced it is warranted.

Child-Rearing Practices Since 1890. Cecilia Stendler provides an historical account of sixty years of child-rearing practices beginning with 1890.[1] In the 1890's and 1900's mothers in the United States were encouraged to help their children develop good moral character. A good moral character emphasized Victorian ideals of courtesy, honesty, orderliness, industriousness, and generosity. Mothers were seen as the critical link in developing a child's character and it was her responsibility to set up a Christian atmosphere in the home to further this development. She was to be a courteous, honest, and a good person, who set an example for her children to follow. The images of mothers exemplified by that decade were painted in romantic idealism. The perception was that mother, by following her instincts, was supreme to scientific knowledge regarding child-rearing. With her loving Christian attitude, there was no child-rearing problem that would be considered insurmountable.

By 1910, the advice being given was in direct opposition to the permissive, loving approach advocated in the 1890's. Parents still were concerned about the good and moral character development of the child, but were now told that they must be strict and that overly expressive, loving attention was detrimental to bringing this about. Infants were to be fed on strict feeding schedules and ignored if they cried between feeding times. Infants were not to be held or picked up because it was believed that such stimulation would lead to dullness in adulthood. The opinions advocated in the first decade of the twentieth century carried over those of the previous decade, based on personal and popular opinions of writers rather than upon scientific study.

In the 1920's, the practices of strict feeding schedules, allowing the child to "cry it out," and strict toilet training schedules were being suggested, reflecting the influence of J.B. Watson and evolving behavioristic theory. Exemplary of Watson's behavioristic advice was that parents should not pick up infants who are crying. It was believed that if this were done, the infant would be reinforced by crying and would continue this behavior. Watson suggested that a child needed a predictable environment in order to develop properly. During this same time period, Freudian sophists were advocating that parents encourage their children to express their fears to them. This practice was to discourage the child's possible fixation in one of the Freudian stages of psycho-sexual development.

Late in the 1930's and throughout the 1940's Karl Menninger and others advocated a change in strict child-rearing practices. Instead of having the child adjust to schedules and strict discipline practices, parents were encouraged to adapt themselves to their child's regulatory systems. Parents were encouraged to be permissive, to delay toilet training, to feed the child on demand, and to look for causes in behavior. This era also marked the mental hygiene approach to rearing children, in which the child's needs and emotional health were considered to be primary. Furthermore, parents were advised to adapt themselves to those needs.

In the twenty year period between 1950 and 1970, the emphasis placed upon the child's needs shifted. Parents were advised to be concerned with their own needs and to try to understand their own individuality in child-rearing. Benjamin Spock, an advocate of this approach, advised parents to develop a firm, consistent, democratic and loving guidance approach in handling children. Benjamin Spock, child care expert, also emphasized the importance of the father's role as an active participant in the child-rearing process.

Other advice given during the era was on the subject of discipline. Physical punishment was consistently de-emphasized in favor of more positive behavior modification techniques. Parents were advised to adjust their discipline approach to match the child's developmental stage. Knowledge about the "normal" developmental milestones of children was considered essential in much of the advice given parents during this period. Parents were encouraged to trust their own common sense and to participate in the child rearing process without fear of harming the child. Twelve child-rearing practices advocated during the period from 1950 to 1970 were identified by Jerry Bigner. They include the following:

1. A primary responsibility of the parent is to train the child for self-reliance by being honest and frank. By being untruthful, a parent could breed mistrust on the part of the child.

2. The parent can best aid the child's intellectual development by providing a sense of security through loving him or her. This will enable the child to feel free to explore and be curious about the environment.

3. The parent has a right to privacy, and should not have to answer every question or provide answers for everything.

4. The best start for every infant is breast-feeding and delivery by natural childbirth methods.

5. Parents should always be in firm control of all situations involving their children. They should not let children manipulate them by their cute behavior.

6. In providing sex education, the facts are not enough. However, parents should not go into too much detail, but protect their own modesty and privacy.

7. The parent should not try to be a perfect parent since this is impossible; mistakes should be expected to be made without causing irreparable harm to the child.

8. The parent is expected to recognize the child as a person of worth and aid in the development of his or her self concept by encouraging independent actions and efforts.

9. The parent is encouraged to use and trust her or his own common sense, since expert advice is often conflicting, confusing, and not necessarily workable, or correct for one's child. The parent is advised to use whatever works best.

10. The authoritative approach of child-rearing is recommended, which attempts to strike a happy medium between authoritarian and permissive child-rearing practices. It encourages parents to set limits within reason, and to shape the child's behavior through positive reinforcement.

11. Discipline is viewed as important in that it affects later adult behavior. The three "D's" of Disobediance, Dawdling, and Defiance are identified by parents as unacceptable child behavior. Control through psychological manipulation is advocated.

12. The most important functions of the parent are overtly expressing love to the child; thinking of the child as an individual person; appreciating what the child does; trusting the child and telling him or her so; and, above all, letting the child know he or she is wanted.

Impact of Changes in Child-Rearing Practices. Both Stendler and Bigner make a strong connection between the changes in child-rearing advice and the socio-cultural changes in the United States during the same eighty-year period.[3,4] Withstanding the psycho-sociological influence on child-rearing knowledge from the 1920's onward, a dramatic change in child-rearing advice and the topics of interest from 1980 to 1970 is reflected in three popular magazines of the day--Redbook, Ladies' Home Journal and Good Housekeeping. The pendulum of opinion seems to swing from variations on the permissive pole to variations on the restrictive pole, with considerable variation in emphasis on the topics meriting discussion. Tables 1 and 2 present the topics given major emphasis over an eighty year time span. Table 1 covers the period of 1890 to 1948; Table 2 covers the period of 1950 to 1970.

Table 1

Percentage of Parent Education Topics in Three Popular Women's Magazines: 1890 - 1948

	% 1890	% 1900	% 1910	% 1920	% 1930	% 1940	% 1948
Physical Development	38	19	24	30	49	22	27
Specific Behavior Problems	11	20	13	22	15	18	10
Infant Discipline	11	10	17	8	12	15	12
Character and/or Personality Development	35	31	39	3	24	23	21
Developmental Stages	1	3	7	1	5	10	9
Sex Education	0	6	0	1	1	4	0
Father's Role	0	4	3	1	5	0	2
Other Topics	3	4	10	31	3	6	17
Total topics	63	95	75	82	65	76	80
Total articles	53	78	62	65	49	59	66

Source: Stendler, Cecilia B. "Sixty Years of Child Training Practices," Journal of Pediatrics 36 (1950), p. 134.

Table 2

Percentage of Parent Education Topics in Three Popular Womens Magazines
1950 - 1970

	% 1950	% 1952	% 1954	% 1956	% 1958	% 1960	% 1962	% 1964	% 1966	% 1968	% 1970
Specific Behavior Problems	3	4	6	9	8	15	11	9	16	13	15
Personality Development	9	6	13	8	11	13	12	8	11	10	10
Socialization	21	19	27	31	26	22	24	23	26	23	23
Parent-Child Relations	19	20	17	19	16	20	23	17	20	22	24
Health Care	19	19	14	6	11	8	12	15	3	7	4
Pregnancy	2	4	3	2	5	3	2	14	9	6	8
Developmental Stages	22	20	19	21	16	15	12	10	12	17	18
Other Topics	5	8	1	4	7	4	3	4	3	2	1
Total Topics	149	142	162	160	122	144	129	141	148	190	196
Total Articles	72	81	73	78	59	68	76	60	83	89	94

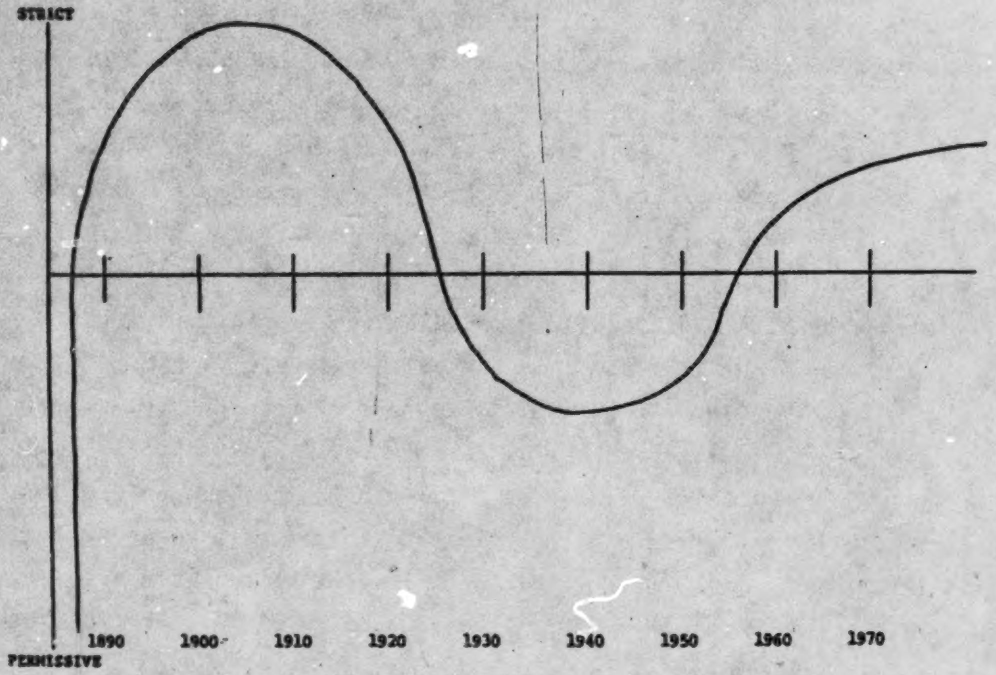
Source: Bigner, Jerry L. "Parent Education in Popular Literature: 1950-1970," *Family Coordinator* 2 (1972), p. 125

The two tables reveal that topics important over the sixty year period from 1890 to 1950, which focused on character development, were significantly less important during the period from 1950 to 1970. The shift in emphasis points out a change from religious moral concerns to psychological adjustment concerns. Where the 1890 mother was interested in moral character development, the 1970 mother was more interested in the psycho-social implications, such as the relative effects of birth order on a child's behavior.

In a comparison of the advice given in the 1890's with the 1970's, mothers during both periods were advised to trust their instincts and common sense when reacting to their children. However the 1890 mother was advised to be permissive, while the 1970 mother was advised to be firm. Table 3 illustrates the shifts between the firm-strict approach and the permissive approach during the eighty years between 1890 and 1970. The diagram reveals the shifts that have occurred in child-rearing practices.

Table 3

The Oscillation Between Strict and Permissive Child-Rearing Advice In Three Popular Women's Magazines from 1890 - 1970



Ethnic Differences. Zena Smith studied the effects of expert opinions concerning child-rearing practices on black and white children.[5] She found that although black parents were less exposed to expert opinion, regardless of class, they were more apt to accept those opinions concerning child-rearing practices than were white parents. In addition, black parents whose views differed from those of the experts, were less likely to be challenged by their peers than were white parents who differed. It was also noted that men and women obtained their child-rearing attitudes from different sources. According to Charles Gelso, men tend to derive most of their child-rearing attitudes from their mother with the father's contribution being negligible.[6] Women tend to derive their information from both mother and father, moreso than either one separately. Although differences in acquiring knowledge about child-rearing techniques exist, there is little support indicating vastly different child-rearing techniques used by black parents when compared to white parents. Basse and Basse, Berger and Simon, and Kamii and Radin found that black child-rearing practices were not appreciably different from white child rearing practices.[7,8,9] Clarke reported findings that indicated a difference in emphasis between black and white child-rearing that were more reflective of class differences.[10] Generally class differences have contributed to greater variation in child-rearing practices than have racial differences.[11,12] Indeed, it appears that both black and white middle class socializing techniques are similar, as well as those of the black and white working class.

Social Class Structure. There are different child-rearing techniques associated with the different social class affiliations.[13] A synopsis of articles presenting child-rearing techniques based on social class appears in Table 4. In the literature presented, it is generally assumed that middle class child-rearing techniques are superior to those of the working class. Middle class techniques tend to rely on psychological persuasion as opposed to physical discipline. The response to the child's emotional and social needs are thought to be beneficial for healthy personality development. Jacoby and Singer focus on the negative aspects of middle class child-rearing practices. Stone and Cristenbaum have presented case studies of maternal deprivation and inadequate mothering that occur in the wealthy class.[14] There is sufficient evidence revealing that regardless of class structure, the specific socializing techniques used have both positive and negative elements. According to Kohn and Rebelsky each social class or culture socializes its members for survival within its specific environment.[15,16]

Discipline Models. Even though specific child-rearing techniques may help a child function within his or her social class or culture, it is the total pattern of the child's experience rather than the specific child-rearing practices that is the important factor

Table 4
The Impact of Social Class on Child-Rearing Practices

<table>
<tr><th>Research</th><th>Middle Class</th><th>Lower Class</th></tr>
<tr><td>A. Erlanger, Howard S. "Social Class and Corporal Punishment in Child Rearing: A Reassessment." American Sociological Review, 39,(1974) 38-85.</td><td>A1. Middle class tends to use more psychological persuasion.</td><td>A2. Lower class tends to use more physical discipline.</td></tr>
<tr><td>B. Kamii, Constance and Norma J. Radin, "Class Differences in the Socialization Practices of Negro Mothers." Journal of Marriage and the Family, 29,(1967),302-318.</td><td>B1. Middle class mothers favor bilateral techniques (consulting, gently requesting, explaining, psychological manipulations, preventing, reminding, etc.) to influence the child's behavior. Middle class mothers reward children for manipulative behavior.</td><td>B2. Lower class mothers favor unilateral techniques (bribing, physical enforcing, coercing, commanding) to influence their child's behavior. Lower class mothers use negative reinforcement when children behave in undesirable ways. Lower class mothers are less responsive to the child's explicit socio-emotional needs and initiate fewer interactions to meet the child's implicit affectional needs</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">C. Kohn, Melvin, "Class and Parental Values" American Journal of Sociology, 64, (1959), 337-251.</td><td colspan="2">Across C1-2. Parents values are related to their social position. Values that seem important but that are difficult to achieve are given high priority in child rearing.</td></tr>
<tr><td>C1. Middle class values that are important but problematic center around qualities that assume an internalized, standard of control (e.g. responsility).</td><td>C2. Working class values that are important, but problematic, center around qualities that assume respectability (e.g. obedience).</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">D. Jacoby, Arthur P. "Transition to Parenthood: A Reassessment," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 31 (1969) 720-727.</td><td colspan="2">Across D1-2. Parenting appears to be more of a crises for middle class than working class. Suggested reasons are:</td></tr>
<tr><td>D1. Middle class standards and expectations are higher. Parenting interferes with career aspirations of middle class mothers. Middle class mothers are less experienced in the care of children.</td><td>D2. Working class mothers place a greater intrinsic value on having children. Principle source of gratification comes from within the family for working class mothers.</td></tr>
<tr><td>E. Busse, Thomas V. and Pauline Busse, "Negro Parental Behavior and Social Class Variables," Journal of Genetic Psychology, 120, (1972), 287-294.</td><td>E1. Autonomous behavior in children is positively related with the mother's education level while the father's occupation is positively related with the mother's autonomy fostering behavior. Father's education is positively related to expressed love.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>F. Singer, Melvin "Delinquency and Family Disciplinarian Configurations: An elaboration of the Superego Lacunae Concept "Archives of General Psychiatry, 31, (1974) 795-798.</td><td>F1. Middle class parents with delinquent offspring have very restrictive policy making, loose policing of children, and very lenient punishment for transgressions.</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

in development.[17] The climate of the family, which encompasses specific interactions, is most important. Table 5 presents a comparison of parental discipline models in child-rearing. These models look at the interactive relationship between parent and child. Some of the literature presented reveals the impact that children have upon their parents, to the extent that they may even affect their parent's behavior in those realms where parents are traditionally thought to acculturate their offspring. The discipline models presented in Table 5 are divided into their positive and negative effects on the child. Overlap exists between the various models. For example, Schaefer's Hate/Control Behavior Model, Wesley's Punishment Model, and Hoffman's and Saltzsteem's Power Assertion Model share similar descriptions of negative discipline and its potential effects upon the child.

The discipline models represent varying approaches in looking at positive and negative family climates. Table 6 presents a synthesis of research findings on child-rearing practices, which indicates that a positive or negative family climate is due largely to the discipline relationship that parents establish with their children. Based on the research, children coming from positive family climates tend to have higher academic achievement, are more creative and have healthier and constructive social behavior. Children coming from a negative family climate tend to exhibit more aggressive behavior, are more likely to be abused, and have destructive behavior.

Family Climate. Family climate seems to transcend the variations of family structures. Atkinson and Ogston's and Herzog and Suda's research showed that single-parent families are able to socialize children as effectively as nuclear families.[19,20] Since most single-parent households are headed by women, some research suggests that the personality development of male children may be adversely affected by father absence.[21,22] The implication is that

Table 5

Discipline Models of Child-Rearing

Author	Positive	Negative
A. Schaefer, Earl S. "A Circumplex Model for Maternal Behavior," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology. 59, (1959), 226-235.	A1. Love/Autonomy-Child reared under atmosphere of love and permissiveness, becomes socially outgoing,creative, active and successfully aggressive. The child is happy.	A2. Hate/Autonomy-Child is aggressive to all except parents. The child has no respect for authority and is primarily interested in socializing and freedom from authority. These children can become delinquents.
	A3. Love/Control-Parents create children who are submissive, polite, neat, obedient. Tend to be overprotected children.	A4. Hate/Control-Children from this atmosphere are socially withdrawn, do not adapt to adult roles well, are self-destructive. These children can become neurotic or feel rejected.
B. Baumrind, Diana. "Effects of Authoritative Parental Control on Child Behavior," Child Development, 37, (1966) 887-907.	B1. Permissive-Parent attempts to act in a nonpunitive, accepting, and affirmative manner toward the child's impulses, desires and actions. Parent does not impose authority but allows self-regulation.	
	B2. Authoritative-Parent attempts to direct the child's activities in a rational issue-oriented manner. Parent enforces and sets standards while trying to view the child's qualities.	B3. Authoritarian-Parent attempts to control shape and evaluate child from an absolute set standard of behavior. Parent believes child should accept parent's will, and uses punitive and forceful measures to curb the child's will.
C. Bell, Richard Q. "Direction of Effects of Socialization," Psychological Review, 75 (1968), 81-95.	Across C1-2. Parents do not have a fixed repertoire for socializing children. They have a repertoire of actions to accomplish each objective. There are two types of parental control repertoires.	
	C1. Lower Limit Control Behavior-Seeks to stimulate the child's behavior which is below parental standards. More related to intrusion measures.	C2. Upper Limit Control Behavior-Reduces and directs behavior of the child that exceeds parental standards of intensity, frequency and competency. More related to punitive measures.
D. Wesley, Richard, Child-Rearing Psychology. New York: Behavioral Publications, 1971.	Across D1-2. Suggest an interaction between punishment and reward with qualifications	
	D1. Reward-Rewards are less effective long term if given 100% of the time. for Generalization of behavior it is appropriate to develop an intermittent schedule of reward. During initial learning reinforce continuously and while the concept is being learned or shaped reinforce intermittently.	D2. Punishment-Physical punishment should be mild and immediate after a misdeed, by a parent who also rewards the child, in situations that the child can readily discriminate. If punishment is harsh, continual and separated from the event by long periods of time it can create and foster the same behavior and other undesirable behavior.
E. Hoffman, N.L. and H.D. Saltzsteem. "Parent Discipline and the Child's Moral Development," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 5, (1967) 45-57.	E1. Affection-Parent becomes positive object to child who controls self in order to please parent. This behavior is then generalized to others.	E.2 Love Withdrawal-Parent gives direct but non-punitive expressions of anger or disapproval of the child. Examples are ignoring the child, express direct dislike of the child, refusing to speak or listen to child. Potentially love withdrawal is more devastating emotionally than is power assertion.
	E3. Induction-Parents seek to give explanations or reasons to child for changing his/her behavior, by pointing out consequences of that behavior to others. Methods are less punitive and more persuasion.	E4. Power Assertive-Parent seeks to control the child by capitalizing on his/her physical power or control over material resources. Parent instead of relying upon the child's internalizing processes relies upon the child's fear of punishment to control behavior.

Table 6

Discipline Models of Child-Rearing

Research	Child Rearing Practices	
	Positive	Negative
A. Walters, James and Nick Stinett, "Parent Child Relationships: A Decade of Research", Journal of Marriage and the Family, 33 (1971) 70-111	A1. Parental warmth is related to occupational choice, positive academic achievement, leadership, and creative thinking.	A2. Poor parent-child relations are related to child's agression, anti-social behavior and extreme parental restrictiveness, authoritarianism and punitiveness related to child's self-concept.
B. Spinetta, John and David Rigler, "The Child Abusing Parent: A Psychological Review". Psychological Bulletin, 77, (1972) 296-304		B2. The child abusing parent has misconceptions about child's developmental growth. The parent's misconception about the child's normal development pattern compels the parent to place unreal expectations on the child's behavior. When these expectations are not reached , the child is then physically abused which the parent considers right and proper within the context of being a parent.
C. Biller, Henry B. and Stephan F. Weiss, "The Father-Daughter Relationship and the Personality Development of the Female." Journal of Genetic Psychology, 116 (1970) 79-93.	C1. Fathers positive their daughters help define the daughters appropriate sex typing.	C2. Inadequate fathering or father absence adversely affects the daughter's personality development.
D1. Araseth, Josephine D. "Creativity and Related Processes in the Young Child A Review of the Literature", Journal of Genetic Psychology, 112, (1968), 77-108	D1. Creative children come from more permissive and less authoritarian homes. have parents who are more open to experience and who are more prone to give their child more independence.	
E. Herzog, Elizabeth and Cecilia Suda, Boys in Fatherless Homes Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Child Development, Childrens Bureau, DHEW, 1970.	E1. Family climate delinquency. It is the mother's emotional, psychological, physical economic, and responsibility adjustment to the father's absence that is a more important determinant	
F. Singer, Darvin L., "Preschooler's Perceptions of Parental Attitudes and Their Effect on Behavior in Nursery School." Child Study Journal, 2, (1972) 197-203.	F1. Children who perceive their parents as controlling but positive, interact in a positive social manner.	F2. Children who perceive their parents as punitive but overindulgent, interact in a negative social manner.
G. White, Burton L. and Jean Carew Watts. Experience and Environment: Major Influence on the Development of the Young Child, Englewood Cliffs: N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973.	G1. An effective mother is (1) permissive and generally indulgent (2) talks a great deal to the child (3) makes the child feel secure and important knowing that help and encouragement can be expected most of the time. (4) prohibits certain activities consistently and firmly; is secure enough to say no without the child feeling unloved. (5) sets up environments suited toward maturing the child's curiosity; the mother does not devote the bulk of the day to child rearing but performs the role of environmental designer and consultant (when a question or new situation arises). (6) has a high energy level. (7) crosses class structures.	
H. Hicks, Mary W., and Marilyn Platt. "Marital Happiness and Stability: A Review of Research in the Sixties." Journal of Marriage and the Family, 32 (1970). 553-574.		H2. Children tend to detract from rather than contribute to marital happiness. Low happiness level may often be associated with marital instability.

families without fathers have problems socializing their children, especially boys, even though fathers in nuclear families have been purported to spend very little actual time with their children. Herzog and Suda suggest that the problem is due in large part to the reaction of the mother to her home situation.[24] If she is well-adapted to the situation she is able to create a positive family climate with children reared effectively. If she reacts negatively then there is likely to be problems with the child's emotional, social, and cognitive development. This assumption is tempered by the results of Hetherington's research, which suggests that most women who assume responsibility of their children after divorce, are affected by post-divorce depression that lasts approximately one year.[25] Along with Hetherington, Herzog and Suda suggest that divorced mothers who function best are those who have had a good relationship with their ex-spouses.[26] The research suggests that while raising children is facilitated by having two or more adults in the household, the most important variable affecting the social, cognitive, and emotional development of the child is the family environment, which is a function of the parental discipline regardless of the family structure.[27]

Parents, Themselves

Christopher Lasch in his recent and controversial book, The Culture of Narcissism, paints a picture of despair when he discusses the plight of parents in raising children. He asserts that society has

> ...left parents with little but love to transmit to their offspring; and love without discipline is not enough to assure the generational continuity on which every culture depends. Instead of guiding the child, the older generation now struggles to "keep up with the kids," to master their incomprehensible jargon, and even to imitate their dress and manners in the hope of preserving a youthful appearance and outlook.[28]

Lone Mothers. In sympathy with Lasch, E.E. LeMasters presents an overview of various kinds of parents without partners.[29] He analyzes the role complications these parents are confronted with, by designating five categories of mothers without fathers, which include those who are divorced, separated, deserted, widowed, and never married. He then goes on to identify four generic features common to the majority of them. They are:

1. Poverty--These mothers constitute 25 percent of American families living at the designated poverty level. Others experience relative deprivation due to the necessity of reducing their standard of living which they had been accustomed to when married.

2. Role Conflict--Since these women have added the father role to their parental responsiblities, they tend to be either overloaded or in conflict over their various role commitments. According to LeMasters, "Being the head of the household for most women means an eighteen hour day, a seven day week, and 365 days a year job."

3. Role shifts--80 to 90 percent of these mothers will remarry, which means that after filling the role of both father and mother when single, they are expected to relinquish the role of father upon marriage. LeMasters points out that there is a built in strain in remarriage between one being a natural parent and the other a stepparent.

4. Public attitudes--The community tends to view these mothers and their children as deviants. While there is greatest sympathy toward the widowed mother, the unmarried mother continues to face condemnation.

Stepparenting. The stepparent role in our society is extremely complicated and needs to be examined further. LeMasters again comes to fore by revealing four major difficulties that the stepparent is faced with.[30]

1. The stepparent is following a preceding parent. In many different ways the child will continuously measure the new parent against the former parent.

2. Stepparents have a tendency to try too hard. Many do not give the child enough time to recover from the previous parent-child relationship.

3. Some stepparents try to replace the former parent. They need to see themselves as a supplement, meeting needs of the child that are not met by the previous parent.

4. There are complex sets of children to be reared by some stepparents. It is easy for parents to favor their biological offspring. Even if no favoritism is involved, the child may feel there is.

The Marriage Relationship. Marital styles also influence how spouses respond to their roles as parents. The study conducted by John Cubber and Peggy Harroff reveals that a wide variation in expectations exists of what constitutes a satisfactory marital relationship.[31] They point out that enduring marriages are not synonymous with happy marriages. By presenting five distinct life styles in the middle class stratum, they show how different personality types work out diverse patterns of marriage interaction. Their typology is based on 211 interviews of 107 men and 104 women, whose marriages had lasted ten years or longer and who stated that they had never seriously considered divorce. The five relationships Cubber and Harroff identify are: the conflict-habituated, the devitalized, the passive-congenial, the vital, and the total.

In the conflict-habituated relationship, much tension and conflict is present, although it is largely controlled. Intermittent conflict is rarely concealed from the children. There is private acknowledgement by both husband and wife as a rule that incompatibility is pervasive, that there is always potential for conflict, and that an atmosphere of tension permeates the togetherness.

There is a clear discrepancy between the earlier years and middle-aged reality in the *devitalized* relationship. These couples characterize themselves as having been deeply in love during the early years. Now most of their time together is "duty time"--entertaining together, planning and sharing activities with their children, and participating in various kinds of community responsibilities.

The husband and wife in the *passive-congenial* relationship had from the start a life pattern and a set of expectations essentially consistent with what they are now experiencing. There are two modes of the passive-congenial. One, by default in which there is so little they have cared about deeply in each other that a passive relationship is sufficient to express it all. The other, by intention in which the relationship is a deliberate arrangement for two people whose interests and creative energies are directed elsewhere other than toward pairing, such as careers, children, or the community.

In the *vital* relationship mates are intensely bound together psychologically in important life matters. Their sharing and togetherness is genuine and provides the major satisfaction in the life they live with and through each other. When conflict occurs it is seldom trivial, resulting from matters of importance to them. They tend to settle disagreements quickly and seek to avoid further conflict.

The *total* relationship is more multifaceted than the *vital*. There is practically no pretense between the husband and wife in the relationship between them or the outside world. When faced with difficulties, they dispose of them without losing their feeling of unity or the essence of the vitality and centrality of their relationship. In this relationship, it is as if neither spouse has, or has had a truly private existence.

Fatherhood. The role of father in parenthood is grossly neglected in the research literature. In that regard Myron Brenton elucidates on what he refers to as the missing concept of fatherhood.[32] He says that

> Seen in the light of learned maternal behavior, American males are on the whole woefully shortchanged when it comes to learning and being encouraged to learn their parental roles...men are clearly disadvantaged in their preparation for fatherhood. Since their potential for the paternal role isn't structured by a biological framework, boys ought to be made especially cognizant of the multifarious parental responses they'll be called on to exhibit one day. Instead, they see--in their own homes--that fatherhood either assumes narrow dimensions or is more or less irrelevant.[33]

Recognizing that the American male bases his masculine identity on the breadwinning role, which occupies the central position in his life, Brenton points out the crucial need for men to be willing to redefine their roles as they adapt to the changing society.

Conclusion. Parents also are represented by all sorts of variations in life syles, approaches to child-rearing, family composition, socio-economic status, and role definition. Only a cursory representation of parents is given here. Others which should not be neglected include adoptive parents, foster parents, handicapped parents, first-time parents over age thrity, homosexual parents, parents with handicapped children, children of aging parents, adolescent parents, and affluent parents, to name a few. The complexity of quality parenting programs is contingent upon the active consideration of the special needs of parents which only they can adequately define and resolve.

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PART II

THE REALITY OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

What is Parent Involvement?

Toward an Operational Definition

Parent involvement, used interchangeably with parenting and parent education, encompasses both, and is the umbrella term that includes all activities in which parents are actively involved in support of their children. These activities include formal or informal programs and individual or group actions at any level of parent participation. If, for example, parents accompany their children on classroom trips, they are involved. If they enroll in a class to upgrade their skills for better employment opportunities, they are improving their family's economic lot, and they are involved parents. Once parents expand their newly developed skills, they can apply this knowledge and skill to other settings and children, and to new behaviors. Parent involvement includes these types of activities, as well as workshops, continuing education, and agency-sponsored programs. The overall objective, regardless of the type of activity, is to develop and improve parent skills within the family milieu and in the total community.

Parenting and parent education are used synonomously throughout the literature. These terms encompass all responses, activities, and skills involved in child management, child-rearing, parent-child communication, and general care of the child.[1] This emphasis is supported by Jackie and Wesley Lamb, who define parent education as "the formal attempt to increase parents' awareness and facility with the skills of parenting."[2] James Croaks and Kenneth Glover define parent education operationally as "the purposive learning activity of parents who are attempting to change their methods of interaction with their children for the purpose of encouraging positive behavior in their children."[3] Unfortunately, these definitions disregard the supportive aspects of parent involvement programs designed for prospective parents, for parents needing vocational skills to facilitate family life, as well as for parent educators involved in training parents, and other community members who are also parents.

Mary Lane presents a more comprehensive definition and describes parenting as the whole range of activities and concerns, and all the knowledge and skills that being a parent entails.[4] Janet Hall (1974) underscores Lane's definition by stressing the totality of the educative activity of a society reaching or directed toward parents.[5] She says,

> It covers all processes of educating parents as such, including their educative role in relation to their children, their children's formal education, and to a changing society, and its objectives are not limited to education in some particular aspects only of the parental role or to certain socio-economic groups of parents, or to education by certain specific means only.[6]

Increasingly experts in this field define parenting from the perspective of what it does, or proposes to do, for parents, children, and other community members and what trainers see as the need of parents in this area. Earl Schaefer has suggested that the major task for child care, educational institutions, and professionals is to provide a support system for family care and education.[7] This he says would require emphasizing the development of communication, cooperation, and collaboration with parents to support the child's extra-academic education. It would also require educators to involve themselves in training parents and future parents in family care and education skills.

The New York State Education Department describes parent education as activities or programs that offer parents an opportunity to gain information and know how to aid them in their roles as parents.[8]

The New Orleans Model of Parent Education operates on the following assumptions.[9]

1. Some parents have child-rearing styles which negatively influence some aspect of their child's development.
2. Parents need a general base of child-rearing information in order to make informed choices about their own practices.

3. Parents who understand underlying principles of human development will be more likely to use these forces to support growth and learning.
4. And, adults and children learn best in a supportive, self-respecting relationship with others.

Methods of teaching parents include the observation of models of adult-child interaction styles, and parent participation in discussions and demonstrations on the management of children in a variety of situations. The program emphasizes the parent's language and vocabulary development to help the parent become more independent in seeking child development information.

Project goals for the Oakland Interagency Project include citizen involvement in programs for neighborhood and community betterment and the improvement of the educational and cultural opportunities for youth and adults.[10] Emphasis is placed on involving minority group parents. Adult education classes and parent discussion and activity groups are centered on helping parents understand their children, developing homemaking and other basic skills, and gaining an awareness of their own culture and value in community affairs participation.

The Head Start Parent Child Center focuses upon meeting the needs of children from the time of conception to age three, and the needs of their parents.[11] The program's primary objectives are to have impact on: (1) parenting skills and attitudes, (2) the parents' sense of self esteem and feelings of control over the environment and personal destiny, (3) the parents' knowledge and use of community resources, and (4) the parents' use of health facilities and on their nutrition practices.

Honig speaks to the need for providing tools for enhancing parenting.[12] She says that parents need to know: (1) how children develop, (2) how to observe the young child, and (3) how to take advantage of settings, routines, and activities in the home to create learning and problem solving opportunities for children, as well as experiences.

Joseph Stevens describes effective parent education programs as those designed to enhance the parent's role as teacher and to ameliorate the child's functioning.[13]

Former U.S. Commissioner of Education, Terrel Bell feels that parents should be trained in many areas.[14] He views the major contribution of parent education programs as necessary to provide training in nutrition, diet and health, principles of child behavior, language development, and discipline.

Either parenting or parent education can refer to a type of formal or informal learning effort, where individuals or groups meet with a designated leader over time to consider concerns and issues important to them as they carry out their roles as parents.

Approaches to Parent Involvement

Although there currently exists a proliferation of programs and experts in the area of parent involvement, trying to help people understand and undertake the role and responsibilities of being a parent is not a new phenomena.[15] In their article "A History and Evaluation of Parent Education," James Croake and Kenneth Glover indicate that innumerable programs exist involving parents, and that it is virtually impossible to know how many parents are actually being reached by them.[16] Probably accurate is their contention that

> ...middle to upper socio-economic level parents participate more frequently than parents from lower socio-economic levels. Mothers rather than fathers are by far the largest proportions of parents reached. Parent education programs are proportionately more often directed to parents of younger children.[17]

Available documentation tends to concentrate on federally-supported programs for disadvantaged parent populations which require reporting at regular intervals; while middle to upper class parents are more likely to participate in privately-supported programs where no reporting is required.

Parenting Programs. Parenting programs are designed to facilitate positive child-rearing and parent-child communication skills as children move through their family, social, and educational experiences. These programs exist in several different models.

A. Educational programs are of two basic types. One responds to the parents' need for skills and knowledge in areas like reading and English. Operation Cope in Washington, D.C. for example tries to intervene in the cycle of poverty by promoting functional literacy in its Black minority women.[18] Another type of program described as educational is the Parent Assisted Learning Strategies Program in Sacramento, California which teaches strategies in promoting language, motor, and and cognitive development in children between 18 and 24 months of age. Most education programs of this type seek to train mothers within the school setting to work in the classroom, or train mothers to work with their children at home. This is done on a group and individual basis.[19] Techniques include:

1. Teaching mothers how to observe behavior in a classroom which they could eventually use at home as well.
2. Teaching mothers how to teach at school.
3. Using structured language patterns to improve verbal abilities.
4. Using toys to teach important concepts such as colors, shapes, and vocabulary.
5. Showing mothers through video tape, role playing, and demonstration on how to praise, encourage, and reward.
6. Using mothers to train mothers.
7. Providing printed materials for mothers to read.

Behavioral Education emphasizes the environmental influences on learning and the social settings of learning. The goals of behavioral training are: (1) training in observational skills and assessment; (2) formal training in learning theory concepts; (3) appreciation of these concepts to their children; and (4) evaluation. In this model, parents select a particular behavior they wish to correct, observe occurrences, analyze the environment in which the behavior most often occurs, and use proper reinforcement which finally leads to extinction of the behavior. This is accomplished through didactic instruction, role playing, modeling, cueing, contingency contracting, and video tape feedback. Project Patrol in Gillett, Wisconsin uses this approach.[20]

The *Rational Emotive Therapy (RET)* model is based on people remaining rational and logical about events and circumstances. Emotive counseling encourages parents to discuss their problems with each other in group settings to dispel ten "erroneous beliefs" of child management. These, according to Hauk are:[21]

1. Children must not question or disagree with their superiors.
2. A child and his/her behavior are the same.
3. Children can upset their superiors.
4. Punishment, guilt, and blame are effective methods of child management.
5. Children learn more from what their superiors say than what they do.
6. Praise spoils a child.
7. Children must not be frustrated.
8. Heavy penalties work best if applied first.
9. A child must earn his/her parents' love.
10. Children should be calmed first, adults second.

After dispelling these beliefs and understanding the reasoning behind them, parents practice and discuss how they apply to their situations.

The *Child Study Association* model utilizes a group discussion format as a means to find out more about themselves and their children. The program teaches awareness of children's developmental stages and the needs primarily important to each stage. Parents are expected to evaluate themselves in terms of what their goals are as parents, how these goals relate to their previous experiences, and how they contribute to improving the awareness of interactions that take place in the family setting. Finally the parent is expected to grow in appreciation of events and circumstances that directly influence the child and the parent.

The *Client Centered* or *Rogerian* model is an individual or group counseling approach based on free expression of feelings; recognition of feelings and assumptions; insight and understanding; taking positive steps; and ending the contact. The methodology followed by the therapist is to:

1. Reflect and clarify when appropriate.
2. Present child development information in answer to direct questions, leaving evaluation of information to parents.
3. Answer questions with a tentative explanation or description of the child's progress.
4. Give support to parents.
5. Avoid being educative.

B. Vocational programs are those designed to increase employment and ultimately raise the economic quality of family life. The majority of those programs are subsumed under the adult education category and a small number have separate parent training aspects. Two programs which do incorporate the parenting aspect are the Child and Family Resource Program in Pottsville, Pennsylvania and Operation Cope in Washington, D.C.[22, 23] Several secondary schools offer in addition to vocational programs, a child development component which utilizes high school students in their child development classes. One such program is Project H.A.P.P.E. in the Oconomowoc Public Schools in Wisconsin.[24] This program operates on a preventive family planning model.

C. Therapeutic models also are included in parenting programs. The major distinction is that most therapeutic models of parenting operate from a problem basis where parents are concerned, that is, parents are involved because they are experiencing problems with their children. Christenson suggests that this is an inappropriate distinction because parents are in need of skills, but they are not sick.[25] This view is reflected in Lamb and Lamb's analysis of what parenting is and what it is not. According to them,

Parent training is:	Parent training is not:
1. training in child management	1. parent psychotherapy
2. study of issues involved in normal child development	2. marital counseling
3. training in communication skills and communication analysis	3. primarily a way of helping the parents relive their own childhood
4. based on the assumption that specific skills are related to being a "better" parent	4. a place for parents to complain about their children and "kids today"
5. time limited and usually short-term	5. long term and expensive
6. task oriented	6. person and relationship oriented

The therapeutic model focuses on the affective domain and based on the models previously described, includes parents in both preventive and deficit circumstances.

Family Life Enrichment. A broad range of existing parenting programs is reflected in the government publication entitled Parents are People, Too... developed by the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH).[27] The document presents twenty-two parenting programs in five categories, all focusing on some aspect of family life enrichment.

Five programs are presented in the priority category of Family Life Education. They are based on the recognition of the family as "the single most influential force which shapes the personality and character of each of us and is the primary source of human loving and caring for most of us."[28] Each of the five programs attempts to help parents establish and maintain rewarding family relationships. Two of them are presented:

1. The *Individual Psychology Association (IPA)* promotes improved relationships between individuals especially adults and children, emphasizing ways of preventing the development of typically troublesome situations into more serious behavior problems. It stresses encouragement rather than reward; teaches logical consequences as opposed to punishment; and deals with the purposes of current behavior instead of analyzing that of the past.

2. The *Continuous Parent Education Program (CREP)* is based on the belief that parenting should be continuous, in keeping with the constantly changing needs of parents through the family growth cycle. It offers a wide range of child-rearing theories and methods in the belief that there is no single best way of child-rearing for all families, and that each family should have the opportunity to decide what works best.

The other four categories of parenting approaches identified by NIMH include the following.[29] (1) The Communication Workshops category involves approaches designed to enhance marital and family communication and understanding. It includes programs such as Marriage Encounter, Family Understand-In, and the YMCA Family Communication Skills Center. (2) The Discussion Groups and Clinics category involves workshops and forums where issues concerning anxieties about changing roles and expectations are talked about and shared. Examples of programs include Worry Clinics--Thalians Warm Line, and Preterm--A Center for Reproductive Health. (3) The category Helpful Organizations involves parents with special problems who have joined together forming organizations that provide mutual support and services. Programs included in this category are Mothers of Twins Clubs, Widowed, Inc., and Parents Without Partners. (4) Miscellaneous Services, the final category, represents one-of-a-kind approaches that present family life enrichment in unique and innovative ways. Programs include the Parent-Infant Neighborhood Center, Family Camps, and Plays for Living.

The National Commission on Families and Public Policies. In the final report of the National Commission on Families and Public Policies, the Commission states that "education is a basic family function, concerned with the cognitive, socio-emotional, and psychomotor development of its members."[30] Stressed in the report are the beneficial outcomes of those education programs in which parents are involved. In terms of education and the family, the Commission has made a number of recommendations; three of which are presented. The Commission recommends that...

> ...design of educational service programs which will diminish the impact of basic stress factors on the family unit, e.g., education for health care, for child-rearing, for knowledge of resources and how to use them, for all styles of families whether or not they have children.
>
> ...educational institutions encourage and assist in the development of broadbased parent participation in educational system operations, including policy and management.
>
> ...educational institutions provide for the development by parents of those competencies which will enable their effective participation in activities designed to facilitate the development of their children.[31]

The Commission then went on to identify three major competencies, which are particularly important to parent educators

> --the reinforcement, by home and family practices, of those learnings related to health care and nutrition, work procedures, interpersonal relations and communication, assumption of responsibility, and other factors which will contribute to the quantity and quality of continued learning,
>
> --the assessment by the family of the quality of the many educational activities which are home-based or home controlled--television-viewing, reading, travel and social activities--in relation to their potential for learning,
>
> --the use of the home and family as a base for experimentation by the individual in the application of newly developed skills and knowledge, prior to use in the community at large.[32]

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The variance in approaches to parenting appears to be almost infinite. However a critical current running throughout all parenting efforts is the fact that the parent is the core family member held responsible for the development and adjustment of herself or himself, as well as the child as a contributing member within the family milieu and the society at large.

Nonetheless, even though parents are seen as the core family members, they are almost never involved in the planning and development of the parenting programs in which they are participants. Unfortunately, many parent educators assume that they are the best judges for determining what parents need and seek. Ironically, when assuming their professional roles, parent educators tend to forget or ignore the fact that they are parents, have been parents, or had parents. Furthermore, there is a tendency to assume that their knowledge and interpretation of what it means to be a good parent represents the best model for effective parenthood.

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[31] Ibid., 61-62.

[32] Ibid., p. 62.

Four Models of Parent Education

Few public school systems in the United States have integrated parenthood education into their curricula.[1] Most programs for teaching parenting skills are offered by private organizations, university community programs or government funded programs. In order to obtain an understanding of how parent education is interpreted and implemented, four exemplary parent education programs are presented. They are (1) Parent Effectiveness Training; (2) Adlerian Parent Study Groups; (3) Home Start; and (4) Relating Experientially with Parents and Children. Three of those programs are national; one program is local, operating and affecting only those families in that area. Each program is discussed in terms of its particular purpose, content, implementation process, and subject population.

Parent Effectiveness Training (PET)[2]

It is the intention of PET to provide parents with training in effective communication skills. Through effective communication skills and a clear definition of parent-child roles and relationships, PET assists the growth of all family members in dealing with conflict situations.

Content Emphasis. Thomas Gordon, PET's originator, states that parents, in their relationships with children are either strict ("winners"), permissive ("losers") or a combination of the two ("oscillators"). In their roles as winners, losers, or oscillators, conflict is inevitable in parent-child relationships and its mutually successful resolution is not ensured. PET helps parents design relationships where there are no winners or losers, and problems are mutually resolved. Parents are given training in listening skills, message sending skills, and conflict resolution skills. They are taught how to actively listen, how to effectively communicate their feelings, and how to mutually resolve conflict.

PET employs a Rogerian Client Centered Therapy paradigm as a theoretical framework for the program. Gordon's "acceptance diagrams" parallel the Rogerian emphasis on unconditional positive regard. It is assumed that by understanding the acceptance diagrams and undergoing PET skills training, parents will be better able to relate, to communicate, and to interact with their children.

Implementation Process. The PET program follows a structured course format for which there is a fee for participation. The course is presented in seven modules, with an eighth module serving to finalize, evaluate and internalize all the concepts and presentations presented. The seven basic modules are:[3]

Module A--Acceptance or unacceptance: The key to a parent's response to a child's behavior.

Module B--How to be an effective helping agent for the child (when the child owns the problem). Roadblocks to communication and active listening are stressed.

Module C--How to modify behavior of children that is unacceptable to the parent (when the parent owns the problem). Skilled in dealing with "below the line" behavior and sending "I" messages are stressed.

Module D--How to modify the environment to reduce unacceptable behavior.

Module E--How to resolve conflicts of needs. No-lose method of conflict is gradually approached.

Module F--How to deal with value collisions. Examples of conflicting values are identified.

Module G--Qualitative time. The balance between different time, individual time , and optimum time is taught.

This no-base approach is built on active listening, in which the listener tries to understand the message. Next, the parents must decide who owns the problem. Finally, both agree to work toward an acceptable solution to the problem. In this approach, six steps are followed. Parents are to:

1. Identify and define the conflict.
2. Generate possible alternative solutions.
3. Evaluate the alternative solutions.
4. Decide on the best acceptable solution.
5. Work out ways of implementing the solution.
6. Follow-up to evaluate how it worked.

Subject Population. Geared to middle class parents, reportedly more than 100,000 parents have been trained through PET. Currently the program is being conducted in forty-seven states and five foreign countries.

Adlerian Parent Study Groups (PSG)[4]

The purpose of PSG is to provide parents with a forum to exchange and to obtain knowledge regarding child-rearing and family relationships. It also serves to educate parents in mastering better communication skills and better understanding of purposive behavior.

Content Emphasis. The Adlerian PSG groups have been ongoing since the 1920's. The theoretical assumptions of PSG uses Adler's individual psychology as its foundation, which expounds that human behavior has purpose and is socially meaningful. Adler preferred to look at the whole of a person's life, for he was particularly concerned with a person's life style. In PSG these ideas have been generalized and then made specific to family relations in a number of different books and programs. Recent examples would be the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) program developed by Dinkmeyer and McKay, and that of Driekurs and Slotz's presented in their book, *Children: The Challenge*.[5,6] The primary task of those two perspectives is to help parents understand the processes of egalitarian problem-solving approaches and the dynamics of their own and their children's purposive behavior. It is believed that through the mastery of these concepts, parents can become versed in the "art of democratic family living."

Implementation Process. The program is presented in a structured course form based upon one of the standard PSG texts.[7,8]

The course of instruction is usually presented in nine or ten sessions. Parents are expected to read the text and come in prepared to discuss the topics and their home application of previous topic techniques. An example of the topics covered by the STEP program are:[9]

Session 1: Understanding Behavior and Misbehavior
Session 2: How Children Use Emotions to Involve Parents/ The "Good" Parent
Session 3: Encouragement
Session 4: Communication: Listening
Session 5: Communication: Exploring Alternatives and Expressing Your Ideas and Feelings to Children
Session 6: Developing Responsibility
Session 7: Decision Making for Parents
Session 8: The Family Meeting
Session 9: Developing Confidence and Using Your Potential

These topics are covered in a group discussion format with the leader facilitating discussion and presenting techniques to be practiced at home. Leaders for these groups are either trained leaders or lay parents who have completed the course previously. There are, however, four states, Arizona, California, Oregon and Illinois, where systematic leader training is available. However, specific training for leading a parent's group is not usually the case. The leader is expected to organize and set up the program for participating parents.

Subject Population. Parents participating in PSG are generally from middle class backgrounds. More specific data is unavailable.

Home Start[10]

The purpose of Home Start is to focus on the development of the total family, while specifically assisting parents on how to help their young children who are under three years of age. It serves to help parents explore their strengths by providing an atmosphere within the family that will facilitate the physical growth and psychological development of their children.

Content Emphasis. The curriculum for the Home Start program consists of four components: (1) education; (2) nutrition; (3) health; and (4) psycho-social services. While each specific Home Start program is geared toward an individual family's needs, general objectives are to be accomplished within each component. These objectives include the following:

Education Component

1. To help enhance parents' knowledge and understanding of early childhood development, by providing them with information and material on how to become better educators of their children.
2. To point out materials in the home that can be used as educational toys and games and to develop toy-lending libraries.
3. To help parents reinforce their children's positive behavior.
4. To help parents help their children become better prepared for school, by improving their language ability and understanding of such basic concepts as colors and numbers.

Nutrition Component

1. To assess the nutritional needs of each family member and provide direct services and referrals where appropriate.
2. To provide information on such aspects of nutrition as the feeding of young children, the purchase and preparation of food, and food handling and storage.
3. To call attention, where possible, to consumer newsletters and food cooperatives.

Health Component

1. To identify health problems of children and other family members and refer them to appropriate services.
2. To provide information on family planning and birth control clinics to interested parents.
3. To help improve home sanitation and safety.
4. To help provide immunization to children and, where appropriate, other members of their families.

Psycho-Social Services Component

1. To help parents identify their own needs and be aware of existing services available to them, such as employment counseling, diagnostic testing, job training, drug counseling, psychotherapy, and housing.
2. To locate and help facilitate transportation to these resources.
3. To help provide much-needed social outlets for families in isolated communities.

The key person responsible for working with parents is the home visitor. In trying to accomplish these objectives the home visitor participates in activities with the parents, the child, and the two together. The home visitor also tries to help parents use resources available either at home or in the community to further the child's development. Although the home visitor, in trying to fulfill the program's objectives, will initiate some interaction to help provide services to the child and the family, the focus of her task is to provide services to the parent, while refining the parent's parenting skills. Parents are encouraged to continue the activities initiated, and to explore other avenues when the home visitor is not there. Examples of the many activities a home visitor may arrange include:[11]

- Talking with the mother about each child and the things she is doing to further its development, praising her for gains made, and making occasional suggestions.
- Introducing activities that involve the older children, or that encourage the other children to work with and help the younger ones.
- Helping the mother with a household chore (such as washing the dishes, making biscuits, or peeling potatoes) and, by involving the child, demonstrating how the activities which normally make up the fabric of each day can be used as constructive learning experiences for children.
- Cooking supper with mother and child, showing the mother (by example) how the child can be involved--noting colors, textures, and shapes of food and kitchen equipment, counting eggs, spoons, etc., and talking.

- Helping parents assess home with regard to safety precautions--exposed poisons, electrical outlets, lead paint, etc.
- Using local telephone book as a directory of resources, showing mother how resources are listed.
- Using "Parent Effectiveness Training" to prevent communications problems within families.
- Holding mothers' group meetings to use one another as resources in finding solutions to child-rearing problems.
- Preparing simple guides to accompnay children's television programs which are shown locally, to make television watching less passive and more active.
- Suggesting ways to turn everyday events into learning experiences, such as going to the grocery store and playing a "color game" on the way or peeling vegetables and teaching the child size and color concepts at the same time.[11]

Implementation Process. Families are visited by a home visitor twice a month for approximately one-and-a-half hours. During that period through conversation, non-verbal interaction, and role modeling the home visitor attempts to help parents provide growth experiences for their children. Although the home visitor works with the child, the focus is on helping the parent develop parenting skills. The home visitor is generally a lay woman trained by Home Start.

Subject Population. Home Start is a program supported by the Administration on Children, Youth and Family, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It started as a demonstration project with sixteen sites, but has spread to over 200 communities affecting over 8,000 children. Parents represent low-income families.

Relating Experientially with Parents and Children (REWPC)[12]

The REWPC program is a local program designed to help parents with children under three years of age learn and practice parenting skills. It also serves to disseminate information to parents regarding exercises, learning activities, and community services related to parenting. In addition, REWPC provides a forum that enables parents to discuss their concerns regarding parenthood.

Content Emphasis. The REWPC program is experimental and is multidisciplinary in design. The disciplines represented in the program include early childhood education, child development, counseling psychology, and maternal-infant health. The basic premise underlying REWPC is that early childhood is a very important period in the development of a child's cognitive skills and that parents are the critical variables in their child's development. The REWPC program tries to develop the parent's parenting knowledge and abilities. The program is committed to an inter-disciplinary approach affirming that parenting is a multidimensional role requiring knowledge from diverse disciplines. REWPC is supplemented by consultation from community resource people such as: nutritionists, home-economists and pediatricians. The program content is comprehensive, emphasizing information regarding child development.

Implementation Process. The program is offered at Prairie View Elementary School in Gainesville, Florida. There are four sequential sessions available during the weekday for non-working parents, and special classes offered monthly on Saturdays for working parents. The sessions cover the topics:[13]

1. Your New Baby and You--for parents, and babies 0-6 months old.
2. Your Infant and You--for parents, and babies 6-12 months old.
3. Your Toddler and You--for parents, and babies 12-24 months old.
4. Your Young Child and You--for parents, and babies 24-36 months old.

Materials are presented in a demonstration-practice paradigm where both parenting skills and pertinent parenting information are presented to parents. The parents then try out their skills with their children during the class session. After this demonstration-practice session, the parents engage in a sharing process where they discuss their concerns regarding the parenting role. An example of a typical session follows:[14]

1. Begin with exercises and learning activities with infants and young children in order to:
    a. establish basic communication patterns between parents and infants,
    b. facilitate sensory-motor development of infants,
    c. encourage the use of natural caretaking situations such as feeding, bathing, diapering, putting to sleep, etc. as opportunities for positive interaction which will enhance the parent/child relationship and the infant's growth and development.
2. Next, post-natal conditioning and relaxation exercises for mothers.
3. Then, conduct a sharing process during the last portion of each class (usually 45 minutes or more), concentrating on discussing:
    a. how the baby has grown and changed during the past week,
    b. how the parents have changed during the week and what they are doing differently as a result of changes in the baby,
    c. what changes or events family members anticipate during the next week. Relatives may be coming or the husband will be away on business, etc.
    d. parents' concerns and interests, such as: baby's feeding; crying; and sleeping; fathers and their involvement with the baby; sibling rivalry; leaving the baby for the first time; feelings about being a mother or father; going back to work; handling negative feelings toward self, child, spouse, and relatives; visits to the doctor; the "Super-mother" syndrome, and guilt related to it; parents and in-laws and a host of others depending on the individual group members.
4. Finally, interdisciplinary consultation from professional resource people in the community including nurses, nutritionists, pediatricians, home economists, psychologists.

Other aspects of the program that supplement the regular sessions include:[15]

- A Parent Advisory Council involving parents in the decision-making process necessary to maintain an effective program;
- A Toy Lending Library providing additional educational materials for parents to borrow and use at home with their children including suggestions for parents on how to use the materials.

- Home Visitions by the Community-Home Facilitator and other staff members when a parent or child is under stress or expresses a need.
- Referral Services Using a Cooperative Tie-in with Other Programs to meet the comprehensive needs of parents and young children, by providing parents needing special services with the necessary referral to other helping agencies. (The ESEA Title III Project CIRCLE, Carver Clinic, the Maternity Infant Care Project, and the Community Mental Health Project are in constant liaison with the parenting education program.)
- Supplementary Materials such as video tapes, slides, and photographs of the parents and children working together in classes, thereby providing feedback and discussion materials, including special Friday workshops in which parents make education toys and other materials.

Subject Population. Parents participating in REWPC are from the entire spectrum of social strata, ranging from the upper to lower socio-economic classes. Also the racial composition of the parent population is mixed.

How They Rate

In order to determine the effectiveness of the four parent education programs presented, a comparative analysis is made using the nine factors considered essential to quality parent education programs developed by W. Stanley Kruger of the U.S. Department of Education. According to Kruger, an effective parent education program must be:[16]

1. Comprehensive
   - .the identification of all topics, themes, or aspects of the knowledge and skills required for effective accomplishment of role responsibilities;
   - .the priority ordering of these factors in relation to local value systems;
   - .the determination of alternate strategies for implementation, related resource requirements, and performance potentials.
2. Competency-Based
   - .the specification of demonstrable knowledge and behaviors which represent the desired outcomes of the teaching-learning process;

.the correlation of those objectives with activities offering the greatest potential for achievement;

.the development of appropriate assessment measures and techniques to enable determination of qualitative and quantitative dimension of accomplishment and effectiveness of related processes;

.the establishment of program-staff attributes, skills and resources essential to maximum program effectivenss.

3. Experience-Based

.the provision of student opportunities for realistic involvement in appropriately supervised field activities with young children;

.an observational and participatory basis for the analysis of child and care-giver behaviors;

.activities geared toward the generalization of self-appropriate operating principles.

4. Flexible

.the development of learning units and associated curriculum materials in modular style and in varying media formats;

.custom-tailoring of curricula to meet unique requirements of special situations, groups, or individuals;

.a recognition that, while organization promotes learning, an organization that is most appropriate for one student may be most inappropriate for another.

5. Interdisciplinary

.the deployment of identified competencies from within an entire organization toward the accomplishment of those tasks for which greatest respective competency exists;

.the utilization of organizational arrangements designed to optimize the use of total resource availability;

.a recognition that the diversity of themes encompassed by comprehensive parenthood education curricula cannot be satisfactorily addressed by the competencies currently available from any single discipline within the usual school structure.

6. Universal

.an acknowledgement of male equity (opportunity and responsibility) in the parenting process;

.the need for men to be adequately prepared to participate both in direct involvement and supportive (e.g. childbirth) parent functions;

7. Continuous

   .the definition of most appropriate placement and sequencing of teaching-learning experiences within broad-based, wide-time-span parenthood education curricula (formal and informal);

   .beginning well before the actual need for knowledge and skills regarding parenthood;

   .continuing for so long as parenthood responsibilities are incumbent upon the clientele served by an educational institution;

   .in terms of human development from conception to death.

8. Cost-Effective

   .the selection of program activities offering the maximum potential for objective achievement;

   .the optimal resource utilization, as well as constraints, incumbent upon those activities.

9. Multi-Goal

   .the delineation of a range of interactive organizational and individual goals which may be contributed to by a proposed program or curriculum; a recognition that the important factor of participant motivation is closely related to the parents' perceived value of an activity;

   .the extent of support afforded by the community is closely related to identification with perceived goals by its constituent members;

   .a legitimate multiplicity of interrelated goals enhances the cummulative strength of both.

Table 1 presents a checklist of Kruger's nine points and evaluates each program on a plus or minus basis as to its effectiveness in addressing each factor. Based on their similarity, the programs formed two clusters--one, the PET and the PSG programs; the other, the Home Start and the REWPC programs.

Table 1

Evaluation of Parenting Programs

	PARENT EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING (PET)	PARENT STUDY GROUPS (PSG)	HOME START	RELATING EXPERIENTIALLY WITH PARENTS AND CHILDREN (REWPC)
1. MULTI-GOAL	-	-	+	+
2. COST EFFECTIVE	+	+	+	+
3. CONTINUOUS	-	-	+w/q	+w/q
4. UNIVERSAL	+	+	+	+
5. INTERDISCIPLINARY	-	-	+	+
6. FLEXIBLE	-	-	+	+
7. EXPERIENCE-BASED	-	-	+	+
8. COMPETENCY-BASED	+	+	+	+
9. COMPREHENSIVE	-	-	+	+

Legend:

+	Satisfies the criteria
-	Does not satisfy the criteria
+w/q	Satisfies the criteria with qualification

Cluster One: PET and PSG. Both PET and PSG are competency-based, universal, and cost effective. Both programs have specific parenting tools to transmit to parents, which include information dissemination, and a repertoire of activities based on parent-child behavior that promote the growth of the family and its individual members. In addition, they emphasize the need for both parents to participate in training to facilitate a balanced household. Within the framework of each program, the use of time and resources appears to be optimal.

Areas of weakness in the two programs focus on their not adequately addressing the following points of Kruger's nine-point scale: criteria for comprehension, experience-based, flexible, interdisciplinary, continuous, and multi-goal. Both programs address three of Kruger's nine points of an effective parent education program in an outstanding fashion. PET and PSG place priority on developing the parents' communication and social relations skills. Neither program provides an opportunity for parents to try out its activities with their children, and be evaluated on their performance. Neither program is interdisciplinary, and each prefers to approach parenting from its own specific theoretical perspective. Each program offers a one-shot exposure to parenting information presumably applicable throughout the duration of parenthood. The limited goals of each program contribute to the narrow range of activities used.

PET and the PSG parent programs are focused upon a specific set of parenting techniques. Each program has its theoretical assumptions, PET-Rogerian and PSG-Adlerian. These assumptions seem to limit the topics that each program concerns itself with. Both programs focus primarily on communication and social relations skills, rather than developmentally-oriented parenting skills.

A procedural shortcoming of each program is the manner in which the program's information is transmitted to the parents. Neither program takes into account the parents' strengths and weaknesses. Both program are presented to the parents without any effort to involve parents in the planning of content relevant to their needs. PET and PSG programs are presented as authoritative voices on the parenting subject, assuming the parents totally lack knowledge and understanding of their present parenting behavior.

Cluster Two: Home Start and REWPC. Both REWPC and Home Start take into account eight of the nine points of the evaluation criteria identified by Kruger, with the exception being the continuous category. Also, both programs are truly interdisciplinary in design and implementation. They are comprehensive programs trying to incorporate a wide spectrum of topics. Each program tries to develop parenting skills in weak areas and emphasizes the strong areas parents possess. Each program provides for overseeing parenting activities. The programs are flexible, trying to adapt to the needs and strengths of each parent population. Both father and mother involvement is stressed (with special consideration for fathers being provided within the REWPC program). A short-coming of both programs is that both focus primarily on the early childhood years, only for children under three years of age. While these early years are very important in the child's positive growth and development, neither program extends its focus beyond this developmental period to focus on parenting skills development during childhood, adolescence, or young adulthood.

Home Start establishes a close working relationship between the home visitor and parents. This enables the home visitor to provide family-specific suggestions regarding the improvement of that parent's skills. The home visitor is committed to present a comprehensive program. Not taken into adequate account are the variations in content strengths and weaknesses of each home visitor, which may or may not correspond to the parent's needs.

Although each program's approach is different --Home Start, an individual home-based program, and REWPC, primarily a group based program--both represent highly effective approaches to parent education. Both programs try to assess parents' strengths and weaknesses, to focus the program's content on those strengths and weaknesses, to supervise and evaluate the parenting activities presented, and to build parents' confidence in their abilities.

Conclusions. None of the programs comprehensively addresses child-rearing over the life-span of parenthood. Only one of the parent programs, PET, has made provisions for parent educator training through what it refers to as Teacher Effectiveness Training (TET). This lack of continuous training and the lack of adaption towards the needs of potential parents, parents of growing children, and parent educators is a shortcoming of all the programs reviewed.

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Part III

IMPLICATIONS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

How Far Have We Come? The Current State of Affairs in Parent Involvement

Participation in Parenting Programs

In their article, "A History and Evaluation of Parent Education," James Croake and Kenneth Glover indicate that there are innumerable programs involving parents, and that it is virtually impossible to know how many parents are actually being reached.[1] Probably accurate, is their contention that

> ...middle to upper socio-economic level parents participate more frequently than parents from lower socio-economic levels. Mothers rather than fathers are by far the largest proportions of parents reached. [and] parent education programs are proportionately more often directed to parents of younger children.[2]

Available documentation tends to concentrate on federally-supported programs for disadvantaged parent populations which require reporting at regular intervals; while middle to upper class parents are more likely to participate in privately-supported programs where no reporting is required.

Based on an extensive Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) search conducted in 1978, more than 5,000 documents were identified covering ten topical areas related to parenting.[3] The topics and the number of items identified per topic are presented in Table 1. Although few items were identified that related to program involvement on the basis of socio-economic level, the search revealed that the vast majority of items referred to federally-sponsored programs with mandated parent involvement. And those programs served primarily low socio-economic and minority parents.

The ERIC search also identified twenty-nine program models for parent involvement, which were reviewed and analyzed. Most of the parenting programs were connected to child care programs for children of participating parents. Table 2 summarizes the programs on the basis of the parent population served, age of children served, preferred parent involvement, and involvement of children; also sum-

Table 1

ERIC Search on Parent Involvement

Topics	No. of Items
Parent Attitudes	1,608
Parent Counseling	367
Parent Education	1,028
Parent Participation	2,163
Parent Reaction	213
Parent Role	1,105
Parent Workshops	93
Lower Class Parents	39
Middle Class Parents	30
Working Parents	78

marized are program content, format and setting. The survey revealed that the majority of programs presented are federally-supported and are aimed at young minority parents--Black, Hispanic, and Asian--who are at the low end of the socio-economic scale, have young children, and are most likely to be involved in programs required as part of their children's child care program.

While all but two of the programs supposedly were geared to encourage the involvement of both parents, the actual extent of father involvement was not revealed. However, it can be assumed that father participation was nominal at best, since the vast majority of parenting programs were offered during the weekday only. Thirteen of the programs were for parents who because of their low economic circumstances needed to develop skills for enhancing the cognitive and motor abilities of their "high risk" education children. Eight of the programs were aimed at improving parents' own economic and educational conditions through vocational and basic education training. Five programs were geared to ameliorate the health functioning of the family. Six programs were aimed at poor white parents in rural areas. The majority of the programs were home-based, with some group training designed to promote improved family conditions.

Evident from the ERIC search is the focus of health and social service agencies on parents with special concerns. In particular, the special parent populations that publicly supported parent involvement programs tend to concentrate on, in addition to

Table 2

Parent Involvement Programs: Summary of Model

	POPULATION		INVOLVEMENT			DESIGN		
PROGRAM	Description	Age of Children Served	Mother, only	Both Parents	Children	Content	Format	Setting
Adlerian Parent Study	Majority	Elementary		X	No	Adlerian Parent	Counseling Discussion	Class
Appalachian Right-To-Read Community-Based Project Kentucky	Low SES	Pre-School Children		X	No	Reading	Training	Home
Asian Newcomer Parent Program San Francisco, California	Low SES Asian	All Ages		X	NO	ESL Counseling	Training	Class
Brookline Early Education Project Brookline, Massachusetts	Majority Middle SES	Birth-Kindergarten			Yes	Health Parenting	Demonstration Training Discussion	Home Class
Chicano Parent Education Program Santa Barbara, California	Low SES	Young Children		X	Yes	Child Rearing Parenting	Training	Class
Clinch - Powell Educational Cooperative Early Childhood Education Program Tennessee	Low SES Appalachian Parents	Pre-School		X	Yes	Cognitive and Social Development	Demonstration Training	Home Mobile Classroom Television
Child and Family Resource Program Las Vegas, Nevada	Low SES	Infants and Toddlers		X	Yes	Health and Development	Training	Class

Table 2

Parent Involvement Programs: Summary of Model

	POPULATION		INVOLVEMENT			DESIGN		
PROGRAM	Description	Age of Children Served	Mother, only	Both Parents	Children	Content	Format	Setting
Child and Family Resources Program Pottsville, Pennsylvania	Low SES	Infants and Toddlers		X	Yes	Social and Health Resources, Parenting, Vocational Training	Training	Class
DARCE Nashville, Tennessee	Low SES	3-5 Years		X	Yes	Parenting Developing Cognitive Skills	Demonstration Training	Home Class
Education in Action New York, New York	Low SES	Elementary and Junior High School		X	Yes	Health Information	Workshops	Class
ESL Project Los Angeles, California	Low SES Mexican American	All Ages		X	No	ESL	Training	Class
Head Start-Adult Basic Education Project New York, New York	Low SES Spanish and 38% Native born with less than 8th grade reading level	Pre-School			No	Reading ESL Parenting	Training	Class
Head Start Parent-Child Centers	Low SES	Birth-3 Years		X	Yes	Parenting Parent Power	Demonstration Training	Class
Holy Spirit Hospital Early Intervention Program Chicago, Illinois	not available	Emotionally Disturbed Pre-School	not available	not available	Yes	Management Tutoring Intervention	Demonstration Lecture Individual Activities	Class

Table 2

Parent Involvement Programs: Summary of Model

	POPULATION		INVOLVEMENT			DESIGN		
PROGRAM	Description	Age of Children Served	Mother, only	Both Parents	Children	Content	Format	Setting
Home Learning Center Gainsville, Florida	N.A.	Birth-3 Years		X	Yes	Parent as Teacher Parent Involvement	Demonstration Training	Class
Home Start Ypsilanti, Michigan	Low Income	3-5 Years	X		Yes	Health Parenting	Demonstration Training Discussion	Home Class
Home Training Program for Parents of Deaf Children Kansas City, Missouri	not available	Birth-3 Years		X	Yes	Language Development and Stimulations	Demonstration Training	Home Class
Houston Parent-Child Development Program Houston, Texas	Low Income Mexican American Families	Pre-School		X	Yes	Language Development Parent Power Resources	Demonstration Training	Home Center
Huron Valley Grassroots Home Start Program Huron Valley, Michigan	Low SES	Young Children		X	Yes	Cognitive Development	Demonstration Training	Class Home
Infant Parent Training Program Austin, Texas	not available	Birth-3 Years Handicapped Children		X	Yes	Parenting Therapy Activities	Demonstration Training	Home Class
Operation Cope Washington, D.C.	Low SES Black	Young Parents	X		No	Adult Basic Education Vocational	Training	Class

Table 2

Parent Involement Programs: Summary of Model

PROGRAM	POPULATION		INVOLVEMENT			DESIGN		
	Description	Age of Children Served	Mother, only	Both Parents	Children	Content	Format	Setting
Outreach Washington, D.C.	Low SES Majority Black	2-3 Years		X	Yes	Cognitive Experiences for Children	Demonstration Training	Home Class
Parents as Partners in Early Childhood Education Saturday School Ferguson, Missouri	not available	Young Children		X	No	Parent Education for Cognitive Development of Children	Training	Home Class
Parent-Child Development Center New Orleans, Louisana	Low SES	Young Children		X	Yes	Child Management and Child Development	Training	Class
Parent Leadership Training Project New York, New York,	Low SES	Parents 16 & Over		X	No	Reading	Training	Class
Parent Process Project Los Angeles, California	Heterogeneous SES	Birth-5 Years		X	No	Cognitive Development	Training Instruction	Class
Preschool Adult Education Program Oakland, California	Low SES Black	Pre-School		X	No	Parent Power Parenting Skills	Discussion Training	Class
Project Prepare Montana	Low SES Indian	Pre-School		X	Yes	Cognitive Skills for Children	Demonstration Training	Home
TEATH Program Brooklyn, New York	Low SES	3rd, 4th, 5th Grades		X	No	ESL	Training	Home Community Agencies

those identified in the survey, include: pregnant teen-agers, teenage parents, divorced parents, abusive parents, single parents, drug or alcohol addicted parents, parents of the gifted, parents of the handicapped, handicapped parents, migrant parents, adoptive parents, etcetera.

Evaluation of Programs

The evaluation of parent involvement programs leaves much to be desired. Most evaluation efforts are based primarily upon a descriptive interpretation of a program and the perceived responsiveness of its participants. Follow-up is virtually non-existent. Professional publications reveal the scarcity of both quantitative and qualitative research being conducted on the effectiveness of parent involvement programs. That which has been conducted tends to focus on parent attitudes and behavior, child behavior, and cognitive gains of children.[3,4,5]

Barbara Goodson and Robert Hess analyzed twenty parent-centered educational intervention programs for disadvantaged preschool children.[6] Four types of program participation were evaluated: (1) parents as policy makers; (2) parents as more effective teachers of their children; (3) parents as supporting resources for the schools; and (4) parents as better parents. Their analysis indicated that the programs consistently produced significant and immediate gains in the children's IQ scores, indicated long-term effects on children's IQ's and their school performance, and appeared to alter and improve the teaching behavior of parents.

The focus of the Head Start Parents' Adult Basic Education Project was to raise the educational level of Head Start parents in New York City. Evaluation of the project's effectiveness, conducted by Ruth Drescher, revealed that gains in both reading and math were noted for those parents.[7] Teachers noted improved behavior of children whose parents attended the classes. The program was evaluated through the use of teacher and student surveys, and by two outside evaluators.

The findings were supported by Hanna Sonquist's study of low income Mexican-American parents.[8] The basis of evaluation for this parent

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education program was to identify participants' social and demographic characteristics, their utilization of existing community resources, their attitudes towards the programs, and the programs' impact on the mothers' child-rearing repertoire and self-concepts. The results revealed that the mothers who participated increased their participation and sense of responsibility, had better resources and skills to solve their problems, and valued their child's and their own learning processes over the control group.

On the other hand, in her evaluation on the impact of the Head Start Parent-Child Center Program, which emphasized: (1) enhancing parenting skills and attitudes; (2) parents' sense of self-esteem and feeling of control over their environment and personal destiny; (3) parents' knowledge and use of community resources; and (4) parents' use of health facilities and their nutrition practices, Monica Holmes concluded that the program did not have profound effects on the majority of the parents served,[9] even though some parents made gains as a result of the program.

Several definitive studies of evaluation on parenting programs were reviewed by Croake and Glover.[10] They note that in a study by Patterson, Cobb, and Ray, a group of parents from eleven families were trained in the principles of behavior modification. Over a ten to twelve week period the parents were taught to devise and apply a series of programs to modify their children's behavior. The study focused primarily on aggressive behavior. Significant decreases occurred in specific deviant behavior of aggressive boys. The effects of the programs revealed significant change in the behaviors of the targeted children, in the behavior of their siblings, and in the parents' interpretations of their children's behavior.

Success of the Saturday School Parenting program was reported by the Ferguson-Florissant School District.[11] At the end of the two year project, 85 percent of the parents were using successful teaching techniques, and positive motivation and reinforcement; and were accomplishing assigned teaching tasks. Similar results were found by Ira Gordon and Barry Grumagh in their Home-Training Center program, which indicated that the parent education approach had lasting effects on the children as well as on some aspects of family life.[12]

The effectiveness of three diverse parent involvement programs were compared by Meredith Larson.[13] The programs included Parent Effectiveness Training (PET), the Achievement Motivation Program for Parents (AMP), and the Parent Discussion Encounter Group (DEG). Each focused on the affective aspects of parent-child interaction. While all three programs had some impact on improving parent-child interaction, in general, the PET and AMP parents profited more from their program involvement than did the DEG parents. Larson concluded that of the three programs, PET was the most effective.

This cursory review of research on the effectiveness of parent involvement programs reveals the neglect that exists where program evaluation is concerned. For the most part, the studies acknowledge the beneficial outcomes of participation, particularly in terms of parents as teachers of their children, and the improvement of their children's cognitive learning skills. There is dire need for futher examination of parent involvement programs and their influence on individual performance and behavior and on family functioning, as well as need for the major expansion of the current body of knowledge in this area.

Critical Needs for Program Development

Given the limitations of research conducted on parent involvement and the increasing interest in it as a vital aspect of adult learning and child development, several concerns emerge which should be addressed. The programs reviewed made no mention of the planning process used in the development of parent involvement programs. This suggests that parent educators are very likely predetermining the needs of parents based on the premise that some intervention in child-rearing is necessary, and that they, rather than the parent populations to be served, know what is required. This perspective may explain the nominal impact that parenting programs seem to have on changing the behavior and attitude of the adults involved. Two investigators have addressed this issue. Edmund Brunner proposes that parent involvement programs must be adapted to the variety of needs, motivations, and habits of its potential clients.[14] He suggests the survey is a useful device, as well as the use of citizens' councils or advisory committees prior to program planning, for conducting needs assessments. Aimee Leifer attempted to develop a curriculum for parents to use in teaching children how to evaluate the reality and applicability of television in their lives.[15] She and her colleagues used interviews with a cross-section of 13 to 16 year olds and adults, that included minority populations in Boston, for curriculum development based on input from those responses.

There is a preponderance of programs for parents of very young children. This is based primarily on the supposition that the first five years of life are the most important in the cognitive development of youngsters. Special consideration is given to young minority children because they tend to enter school functioning at a level below that of their white counterparts.[16] Additional programs need to be developed for adolescents and young adults before they become parents. A unique program geared to high school students that prepares them for parenthood is the Parent Readiness Education Project. In this program, future parents are given a foundation for parenthood, opportunities to relate better to their own parents, and possibilities for increasing school, community, and home relations. More programs of this type are needed.[17]

Particular attention should be given to the training of parent educators. What life experiences are affecting their performance? How do their attitudes, values and lifestyles determine their behavior and teaching approaches? Institutions of higher learning might do well to direct their attention to the training of trainers that focuses on the fact that parent educators are adult learners along with their parent participants.

TABLE 3

Two Perspectives on Education

QUESTIONS	THE CLASSROOM PERSPECTIVE	THE LIFE-TIME AND LIFE-SPACE PERSPECTIVE
Where is a person educated?	In the school	In total life space, including the home, mass media, and school.
When does education occur?	In the school	During total life time, from birth to death.
Who are the students?	School-age children	All who are engaged in the educational process--parents, peers, teachers, etc.
What is the role of the professional educator?	To teach the child	To be a leader and resource person for the educational process.
How does one educate?	Through formal instruction	Through relationships, varied experience, language stimulation, etc.
What is being learned?	Academic skills	Relationships, interests, attitudes, behavior, language, cognitive skills, etc.
What are the major goals of education?	To master academic skills and to earn academic credentials	To further individual development and to promote social adjustment and competence.
What is the most important educational institution?	The school	The family.

By acknowledging the potential impact of parent involvement efforts on teaching-learning practices, a new definition of education may be in order. Such a definition would more specifically address the traditional notion of education as the "act or process or rearing or bringing up," by giving greater prominence to the importance of the family as a primary resource in the education of children, youth, and adults involved in the schooling process.[18] It is Urie Bronfenbrenner's contention that parents must be significantly involved with the total education of their children, both in and out of school.[19] While that may be a bit extreme, the involvement of educators in training parents and future parents in family life, child care and child rearing, and education skills should become an essential aspect of the schooling process. In that regard, Earl Schaeffer stresses the importance of broadening our current perspective on education, and suggests the adoption of one that highlights education for life. Table 3 presents his comparison of the classroom perspective and his life-time and life-space perspective.[20]

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The Dilemma of Parent Involvement: Issues for the Future

Essential to the well-being of all family members is the existence of a healthy family environment. While parents are more aware than ever of the importance of early childhood, they are in a quandry trying to decide what is best for the child that is within the realm of their capability. No matter what changes in form and function occur within the family, as we approach the twenty-first century, parent involvement provides an ideal vehicle for accommodating the evolving social system. It is significant that increasing emphasis is being placed on parent involvement in all aspects of individual development, from birth through adolescence and adulthood.

Already a decade hence, the 1970 White House Conference on Children and Youth attempted to identify the dilemma facing parents, even though it underestimated the strength of the family. It was pessimisticcally reported that:

> In today's world, parents too often find themselves at the mercy of a society which imposes pressures and priorities that allow neither time nor place for meaningful activities involving children and adults, which downgrades the role of parents and the functions of parenthood, and which prevents the parent from doing the things he wants to do as a guide, friend, and companion to his children...the actual patterns of life in America today are such that children and families all too often come last...we are experiencing a breakdown process of making human beings human... by setting our priorities elsewhere, by claiming one set of values while pursuing another, we leave our children bereft of standards and support, and our own lives impoverished and corrupted.[1]

In an effort to resolve this dilemma, increasing focus has been placed upon parent involvement as fundamental to effective child-rearing. While the concept of parent involvement is not new, it has been traditionally perceived as being primarily an effort to educate parents in child care. Even though the 1960s initiated the current mounting impetus for parent involvement, successful efforts have been limited.

Parent Involvement Defined

As has been stated previously, no specific definition for parent involvement exists. Parent involvement tends to be defined by identifying various activities in which parents can possibly participate. Endorsed by many parent educators, is the interpretation provided by the late Ira Gordon, which identifies several levels of possible parent involvement.[2] They encompass:

Passive participation

1. Parents as an audience (role-conferences, newsletters, etc.).

Active participation

2. Parents as a reference (role-insights and perspectives on their child).
3. Parents as the teacher of the child.
4. Parents as volunteers in the classroom.
5. Parents as trained, paid aides.
6. Parents as participants in the decision-making process.

Within this context, parent involvement can be interpeted as strategies for the child, for the parent, and for social change. The strategies focus on parent involvement pertaining to child care provided outside of the home, namely through center care.

Strategy I: Parent Involvement for the Child. The focus of this strategy is on the support which parents provide their child in his or her development to supplement the care received outside the home. In child care arrangements outside of the home, the parents' role is more passive than active. Parent involvement in those settings is characterized by various kinds of activities. Since parents are the primary source of information, a major activity involves providing child care providers with information about the child. Another type of activity involves parents in conferences, such as staff-parent conferences to discuss the child's progress, open house activities for parents to visit and meet with staff, and response to home visits by care givers. The parent as teacher of the child is a third activity which involves supplementing at-home learning activities with materials borrowed from the facility or being given a series of learning activities to be conducted with the child at home. All of the activities within this strategy are on the periphery of actual involvement in a parenting program.

Strategy II: Parent Involvement for the Parent. This strategy focuses upon direct involvement in the child care program. It applies most to parents who either are not working or who are part of the child care staff, as a volunteer or paraprofessional. Parent involvement activities include participation in the operation of the child care facility from numerous perspectives--as teacher, health and nutrition aides; as volunteers performing housekeeping tasks and general child care activities.

Whether or not parents are involved in daily activities, all parents are able to be involved as learners. In this capacity, parent involvement includes activities which stress effective child-rearing practices. Within this parent education context, the range of activities can be quite broad. For example, it might include means to obtain better child care skills, to develop new understandings of parenthood, and to help the child care facility provide better quality service. Public awareness, including interpersonal relations skills development, also may be cultivated.

Within this strategy, parent involvement is a direct supplement to child care activities conducted at the child care site. The parent is perceived as benefiting directly from this type of involvement.

Strategy III: Parent Involvement for Social Change. Involvement of parents in policy decisions and serving in an advisory capacity to a child care facility is the major focus of this strategy. It is through the implementation of this strategy that parent power can be exerted. Primary parent involvement is through membership on boards and committees. This strategy is the most difficult to implement since involvement at this level is most threatening to child care staff.

It is significant to note that parents tend to be on advisory boards more often than on policy boards. In public and non-profit child care centers, parents are usually elected to the boards; in school-supported and private, proprietary centers, parent representatives usually are appointed by the director. Another significant factor is that centers receiving federal funds are now required to offer a parent involvement program. However, little information is available as to the success of those program efforts in initiating or maintaining parent participation.[3]

Considerations. The definition of parent involvement needs to go beyond the activities identified by Ira Gordon. While research indicates that parent involvement continues to be defined in traditional terms, new means of implementing parent involvement are needed, with particular emphasis on the participation of parents who work all day.[4] In broadening the concept of parent involvement, the selection process by which parents select child care services is one area in need of exploration. The fact that parents provide economic support for child care service is another aspect of parent involvement. A third and critical area of parent involvement focuses upon developing skills of future parents. The target population of this "parenting" effort is junior and senior high school students.

Parenthood as a Developmental Process

In order to facilitate the development of effective child-rearing practices among parents and parents-to-be, a basic understanding of alternative family structures is necessary. The late Margaret Mead provides a foundation when she asks the question, "Can we change the physical setting and the sources of subsistence quickly enough to accommodate the kinds of family life which are deemed desirable?"[5] Thus far there is a significant lag between changing family structures and socio-cultural acceptance and accommodation of these changes. It is Mead's contention that

> Just a brief look at the tremendous variety of solutions in the past should reassure us that a society can devise new systems of economic organization, child rearing, education, religious sanctions, for human effort within which new viable family forms can be developed and cultivated. A glance at changing styles of expectation among young people in the United States in the last 50 years, from the small family of the 1930s, to the over-domestication of the 1950s, to the irresponsibility of the 1970s, should reassure us of our capacity to change, and change rapidly.

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> With the continuing demand that fewer children be born, there will probably be continued and growing permissiveness towards the formation of many different kinds of households besides the traditional couple--two women, two men or clusters of adults who among them care for children whose presence gives meaning to their lives. The more densely settled, diversified community would also provide a great many of the back-up services which make homes with many children less exacting, for many adults would pinch-hit for parents.[6]

In attempting to identify characteristics of quality parenthood, Thomas A. Yawkey identifies three crucial factors.[7] (1) Parents, as mature adults, must develop a clear understanding of themselves as individuals. (2) Parents need an appreciation for the demands and limits of the developmental patterns their children are experiencing. (3) Parents must develop open communication between and among themselves, child care professionals, and their children. Furthermore, in approaching parenthood as a developmental process, there are two things which must be considered: first, some parents are better prepared for parenthood than others; and second, child-rearing is not easy even for parents who are competent and well prepared to provide an optimal environment for the child.[8] Therefore, preparation for parenthood becomes increasingly important, and it should include the learning and developing of parents, parent educators, and child care providers, along with children and youth.

Preparation for Parenthood. Parents and prospective parents need to understand better the developmental needs of children and adolescents, as well as themselves as adults; and the complexity and significance of their role as parents. Parent education, which currently focuses on the development of child-rearing skills, is particularly important to three groups--parents with infants or young children; junior and senior high school age students, who do not yet have children; and teenage parents who may or may not still be in school.[9] Within this parent education context, areas which need to be addressed include: (1) the changing social, physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of children, adolescents, and adults; (2) the similarities and differences in the way in which individuals develop; and (3) the role of the family in the parent's, as well as the child's, development.

More specifically, parents need to have knowledge of human development and observation skills to be aware of the development of their children. Some tools to facilitate this process include exposure to alternative child-rearing approaches, especially in relation to discipline and problem avoidance. Learning to use the environment is also an important tool, which includes making the most use of settings, routines and activities occurring between parent and child. Language tools based on the child's own language development which are reinforced by the parent, are also important in stimulating the development of the child's cognitive abilities.[10]

Parent Involvement in Programs

More and more emphasis is being placed on the importance of parent involvement in programs for young children to the neglect of older children and adolescents. Federal endorsement is such that parent involvement is mandatory for all federally supported child care programs. Parents, whose children are involved in those programs, must be provided the opportunity to become involved in the decision-making process concerning the nature and operation of a child care facility. Also, parents must be provided with the opportunity to participate in the program and observe their child in the facility at times that are convenient to them.[11]

A myriad of programs exist which emphasize alternative approaches to parent involvement.[12,13] Probably the best known effort is through Head Start in which parent involvement is but one additional aspect to the comprehensive preschool program. Seen as a viable alternative to center-based programs, Home Start is aimed at involving parents as the major means of helping the child at home. Project Follow Through combines home visitation with parent classroom participation and emphasizes the tie between parents and teachers as co-educators. Television serves as an aid to parents working with their young children through the assistance of Sesame Street, and for values education of the entire family there is the audience-involved sit-com, The Baxters. Teaching teenagers parenting skills is emphasized through the Education for Parenthood Program. There are many other samples of parent involvement, however significant data determining the effectiveness of these numerous efforts has yet to be established.

Obstacles to Parent Involvement

No matter how it is interpreted and put into operation, parent involvement is not easy to implement. Even though parent response may be enthusiastic initially, sustaining participation is most difficult. The apparent interest lag which occurs is frequently labeled "non-involvement," relegating the concept and implementation of parent involvement activities to remaining essentially "paper" qualifications.[14] Three major obstacles contribute significantly to the reduction of parent participation in formal programs--the professionals, the bureaucracy, and parent power.

The Professionals. The antiparent sentiment which permeates many parent involvement efforts is evident in both the child care provider and the public school teacher, who continue to perceive the classroom as their domain and parents as unwelcome invaders. Two factors contribute to this sentiment. (1) Parents are not viewed as resources in the child's developmental process. (2) Professionals' perception of their role as expert maintains an elitist posture. University-based training programs continue to reinforce both factors by supporting the notion that parents know little about children. Consequently, parent involvement, particularly in the decision-making process, challenges the professional's control over a distinguishing body of knowledge.[15]

The Bureaucracy. Although of lesser importance than the professional stance on parent involvement, local, state, and federal bureaucracies also contribute significantly to discouraging parent involvement. In many instances, only when parent involvement is a prerequisite to obtaining funds are parents solicited to indicate community participation. Unless parents are directly involved in the planning process, they tend to perceive these programs as tokenistic, establishing a negative mind set which must be overcome.[16] Furthermore, since the guidelines are usually interpreted by the professionals, they may interpret them as they choose totally disregarding parental involvement needs and input. Local bureaucratic response to parent involvement is frequently negative, and parents are frequently excluded or discouraged since they are perceived as only complicating matters in an arena which is already overwhelmed by tremendous vested interests.

Parent Power. As has already been indicated, the professionals and the bureaucracy would prefer keeping parent involvement on a passive basis. Both fear the potential power of parents should they decide to mobilize. Indeed, it is within the realm of parents who exert their power to obtain and maintain a position of authority and control of child care services. While care givers within the center framework are encouraged to include parents on policy boards and in the policy-making process, an exaggerated concern exists relating to the possible negative effects of too much parent involvement. Parents have the potential of having significant influence on policy decisions relating to program design, staff selection, and operations. Indeed, on a broader scale, the recent White House Conference on Families has indicated that parents, representing all segments of the social strata, are no longer willing to be passive participants with decisions made for them by an indifferent and self-serving political infrastructure in a society that is becoming increasingly complex and a global community that is beginning to coalesce.

In Conclusion

If parent involvement is to be truly beneficial to children, adolescents, and parents, the question that must be addressed is how to design and implement effective programs. In spite of the tremendous amount of information available on parent involvement, most of it reflects isolated efforts which have been met with some success. Furthermore, most of it focuses upon low-income parents, which tends to distort further the parent involvement picture. Nonetheless, Robert Hess of Stanford University and others identify a number of significant implications of parent involvement that should be given special attention.

> 1. Parents are not likely to be involved in programs when their life conditions demand that time and energy be primarily focused on meeting noneducational needs, such as adequate housing, clothing, food and so forth...
>
> 2. The recruitment and continued involvement of parents is a difficult and arduous process. Staff persistence and commitment is crucial to success...
>
> 3. There is a trend in parent involvement programs to move from passive roles, where parents are recipients of aid and information, to more active roles in which parents act as teachers' aides, decision makers, and teachers of their own children...
>
> 4. The involvement of parents has definite implications for the teacher's role. Traditionally, teachers have been child oriented and have attempted to attain autonomy in the classroom with little interference from and interaction with parents. Parents have been viewed as competing agents of authority and respect.
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> . . . . . .
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> 5. We need to understand the effects of intervention into family life and its implications for programs which can successfully involve parents in their children's education.
>
> 6. Finally, the concern about the impact of early education institutions upon the nature and structure of the family has implications that go well beyond socialization and educational issues...The impact of the system thus deserves careful study, both because of its long-term implications for society and because of the educational needs that may be created by these fundamental shifts of institutional structures.[17]

The concept of parent involvement needs as its foundation, an awareness of and sensitivity to the variations in cultural and familial structures which directly relate to how parents can best be involved. In addition, the concept of parent involvement needs to be extended beyond center-type child care or that which exists within public education.

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